

The Morse code has been and remains a distinguishing mark of the Amateur Radio Service. It is the essential language of Amateur Radio communications in emergencies. Eliminating the requirement for Morse code proficiency would fundamentally change the character of Amateur Radio and decrease its usefulness as an emergency communications service. I am in favor of retaining at least the 5 word per minute exam for all license classes.

Industry Canada seems to have a good approach to this issue. The FCC should develop a comparable structure in our testing program. For example: Include the Morse code test as part of the exams, but do not grade it separately from the rest of the exam. If an applicant receives a grade of 75 percent on the overall exam (including the Morse code exam), he/she would be granted that particular license for which they are applying. An applicant might fail the entire Morse code test, but still pass the remaining part of the exam for an overall grade of 75 percent or better.

Having knowledge of the Morse code as a communications mode is a good thing for Amateur Radio. Eliminating the requirement would only dumb down the service and cripple its ability to function in emergencies.

I hope ARRL will really put pressure on the FCC to keep this vital communications mode as part of the overall licensing requirement,

Respectfully,

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